

OBITUARY

REX ELLINGWOOD BEACH died on 7 December 1949 at the age of seventy-two. He was a member of the first party to set out from the Yukon to the Tanana River at the time of the "Gold Rush", and between 1897 and 1902 he mined and prospected for gold in Alaska and north-west Canada. The story of these years is told in his autobiography, *Personal exposures* (New York, London, 1940). He afterwards took part in adventurous expeditions to Panama and Colombia. Rex Beach will be remembered for his excellent mixture of fact and drama in novels such as *The spoilers of the north* (London, 1912), *The silver horde* (London, 1912), and *The Barrier* (London, 1912), full of the zest for adventure.

LEONID LVOVICH BREITFUSS was born in St Petersburg of German parents on 1 December 1864 (19 November, old style) and died on 20 July 1950 at Bad Pyrmont, Lippe. He studied zoology in Berlin, specializing in sponges, and later became a member and eventually the leader of the Murman Scientific-Industrial Expedition of 1898–1908. The expedition made comprehensive marine biological and oceanographical investigations in the Barents Sea, and resulted in the development, from about 1903, of the trawling industry in these waters. A long but incomplete series of reports was published, known as *Ekspeditsiya dlya Nauchno-Promyslovykh Issledovaniy u Beregov Murmana* [*Expedition for Scientific-Industrial Investigations on the Murman Coast*] (St Petersburg, 1902–07), continued as *Trudy Murmanskoy Nauchno-Promyslovy Ekspeditsii* [*Transactions of the Murman Scientific-Industrial Expedition*] (St Petersburg, 1912–15).

Between 1912 and 1920 Breitfuss was director of the hydro-meteorological branch of the Russian Navy, and was responsible for the establishment of four meteorological and wireless stations in the Kara Sea. He was also responsible at this period for the organization in Norway of relief expeditions to search for missing Russian expeditions in the Barents and Kara Seas. It was on one of these expeditions, in 1914, that an aircraft piloted by Lieutenant Nagurskiy made the first flights in the Arctic—over Novaya Zemlya and the Barents Sea.

In 1920 Breitfuss left the Russian service and in 1922 settled in Berlin. He wrote many papers describing the results of Russian work in the Arctic, and from this time his main interest lay in the general history of the polar regions. In 1924, together with Walter Bruns, he founded the organization known as "Aeroarctic", an international society for the exploration of the Arctic by means of aircraft; he later edited the society's journal *Arktis* (1928–31). The main achievement of "Aeroarctic" was the organization of the flight of the *Graf Zeppelin* over parts of the Soviet Arctic in 1930.

Between 1929 and 1950 he contributed four bibliographical reports to *Geographisches Jahrbuch* (Gotha), describing the history of polar exploration in the period from 1913 to 1947. In 1939 he published *Arktis. Der derzeitige Stand unserer Kenntnisse über die Erforschung der Nordpolargebiete* (Berlin) with two large-scale maps of the arctic regions and a chronological list of more than 400 expeditions; this was followed in 1943 by a less detailed account, *Das Nordpolargebiet. Seine Natur, Bedeutung und Erforschung* (Berlin) and it was his dearest wish to round off his life's work with a similar account dealing with the Antarctic.

The end of the war found Breitfuss at Wunsiedel, Bavaria; he later moved to Deutsches Hydrographisches Institut, Hamburg, and until the last was working there to complete his book.

WALTER ELMER EKBLAW died in June 1949 at North Grafton, Massachusetts, aged sixty-seven. He was a man of many interests and from geology branched off into botany, archaeology and economic geography. Ekblaw accompanied Donald B. MacMillan's "Crocker Land" expedition in 1913-17 as a botanist and geologist. His most important journey took place in the spring of 1915, when he made a geological sledge journey with two Eskimos, Etookashoo and Esayoo, westwards across Ellesmere Land to Eureka Sound, northwards to Greely Fjord, and from there to Lake Hazen and Fort Conger, returning by Kennedy Channel and Kane Basin. On his return to the United States he wrote a paper on "The importance of nivation as an erosive factor, and of soil flow as a transporting agency, in northern Greenland" (*Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Vol. 4, 1918, p. 288-93), and also one on "The food birds of the Smith Sound Eskimos" (*Wilson Bulletin*, Vol. 31 (o.s.), Vol. 26 (n.s.), No. 106, 1919, p. 1-5). Later publications dealt with "The ecological relations of the polar Eskimo" (*Ecology*, Vol. 2, 1921, p. 132-44), and "Eskimo dogs—forgotten heroes" (*Natural History*, Vol. 37, 1936, p. 173-84).

Ekblaw was appointed Professor of Geography at Clark University in 1926. He also became editor of *Economic Geography*. One of his latest writings was a chapter on "Foods for defence" in *America at War: a geographical analysis* (New York, 1942). In 1947 he received the Order of the North Star from King Gustav V of Sweden "for his work in promoting good relations between Sweden and the United States".

ANTHONY FIALA was born in Jersey City in 1869 and died in Brooklyn, New York, on 8 April 1950. At an early age he displayed ability both as artist and craftsman, and this led him to choose illustrated journalism as a career. He later joined the United States Army, served in the Spanish-American war of 1898-1900, and rose to the rank of major. He accompanied the Baldwin-Ziegler Expedition to Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa (Franz Josef Land), 1901-02, as photographer and took the first motion pictures of the arctic regions. The expedition failed to achieve its avowed object of reaching the North Pole, and Fiala was chosen to lead the Ziegler Arctic Expedition of 1903-05, which also aimed to reach a high northern latitude. The expedition ship *America* was crushed in the ice off Zemlya Frantsa-Iosifa in November 1903, and sank two months later. An attempt to relieve the expedition in the summer of 1904 failed, but the party was finally taken off by the *Terra Nova* in August 1905. The achievements of the expedition are recorded in *The Ziegler Polar Expedition, 1903-1905. Scientific results* (Washington, D.C., 1907), and in a popular narrative by Fiala entitled *Fighting the polar ice* (London, 1907).

During the course of his two arctic expeditions Fiala travelled more than 4000 miles by small boat and sledge, acquiring wide experience in matters of clothing and equipment. On his return to the United States he established a sporting goods firm and for the remainder of his life devoted himself to the design of field equipment. This activity demanded his intimate participation, and his last major field expedition was in 1912-13, when he accompanied Theodore Roosevelt on his journeys in the Amazon Basin.

JOHN W. GOODSSELL died on 18 November 1949 at the age of seventy-six. He took part in the Peary North Pole Expedition of 1908-09 as medical officer and naturalist. Goodsell led one of the five supporting parties and, accompanied by D. B. MacMillan, reached lat. 84° 29' N. During the expedition he sledged a total distance of 1800 miles in ninety travelling days.

PATRICK KEOHANE who died on 30 August 1950 came from a little village on the coast of County Cork, and had a love of the seas and sailing ships. As a petty officer

R.N. of Scott's last expedition, 1910-13, he was chosen for the main landing party in McMurdo Sound, and took part in the Depôt Journey. During the second year he was on the Polar Journey to the top of the Beardmore Glacier, returning to Winter Quarters on 28 January 1912. At the end of March he was at Hut Point which was cut off by open water, and went out on to the Barrier with Atkinson on the chance of helping the Polar Party. When the sea had partly frozen over and help could be got from Winter Quarters he again went out in April with Atkinson and a four-man party to try and sledge up the western coast of McMurdo Sound to meet Campbell's party if they were sledging down the coast. However, they were turned back by the sea ice going out in front of them. During the third year he was on the Search Journey.

He was a dependable Irish seaman, who took things as they came, without worrying overmuch. In the big blizzard near the Gateway to the Beardmore, remarkable for the enormous masses of soft snow in which tents and ponies were buried, he composed and sang a song which Scott quotes in his diary. Probably he holds a much-to-be avoided record by falling to the full length of his harness eight times in 25 minutes into the big crevasses above the Cloudmaker. He was a useful and cheerful man in difficult times, and as such was doubly welcome the third and last year down south.

He was 71 years of age when he died and he spent nearly 50 years in H.M. Service. He was one of those people who do the spade-work which enables others to do other things—more spectacular perhaps. He said he always wanted to see what was on the other side of the hill. And he saw.

A. C.-G.

JOSEPH LEESE, a seaman in the *Terra Nova* during the British National Antarctic Expedition, 1910-13, died on 19 December 1948 at Stoke-on-Trent after an operation.

ANDRÉ-PAUL MARTIN, known as J. A. MARTIN, was born on 20 August 1911 in Paris and died on 21 October 1949 on board the *Commandant Charcot* off the coast of West Africa. Martin, who worked as a journalist, photographer, and cine-photographer, was a keen mountaineer and ski traveller. He did his military service with the Chasseurs Alpins, and gained experience in the Alps, and later in the Dolomites, and the mountains of Corsica. In the winter of 1943-44 he helped to form an association known as "Froid et Altitude", which had as its main object the organization of expeditions to the polar regions. In the summer of 1946, with Robert Pommier and Yves Vallette he went to Spitsbergen, and made a 500 km. journey man-hauling from Billefjorden to Kapp Fanshawe on Hinlopenstretet and return. Newtontoppen (1717 m.) believed to be the highest mountain in Spitsbergen, was climbed by the expedition, which claimed to have sighted from the summit an even higher mountain—"Mont Perrier"—some 20 km. to the north-west. In January 1948 Martin joined Expéditions Polaires Françaises and helped to organize the French Expedition to West Greenland, 1948. His next activity was with the organization of the French Antarctic Expedition, and as second-in-command of the expedition accompanied the *Commandant Charcot* on her unsuccessful attempt to reach Terre Adélie in the 1948-49 season. In the autumn of 1949 Martin went south again with the *Commandant Charcot*, but died suddenly of a cerebral haemorrhage.

HENRY GASCOYEN MAURICE, C.B., was born on 24 May 1874 and died on 12 May 1950. He was educated at Marlborough and Lincoln College, Oxford. In 1904 he was called to the Bar, but later joined the Civil Service; in 1912 he became Assistant Secretary in charge of the Fisheries Department of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. At first this appointment, held until his retirement in 1948, was criticized by zoologists, but his qualities soon won him acceptance, affection and appreciation. Maurice early realized the importance of the conservation of animal resources on both

economic and aesthetic grounds, and became an active leader in several aspects of this field. He was a member of the Discovery Committee, which worked to conserve the stocks of whales; he was a member, and later President, of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, seeking the rational utilization of the fisheries of the North Sea; in 1942 he became President of the Zoological Society of London, and was also Secretary of the Society for the Preservation of the Fauna of the Empire, and editor of its journal. Far-sighted, Maurice's influence was great, his advice widely appreciated; wisdom and kindness were the foremost attributes of this angler and nature-lover, and with them went enthusiasm and tact.

G. C. L. B.

HELGI PJETURSS was born in Reykjavík on 31 March 1872 and died there on 22 January 1949. He studied zoology and geology at the University of Copenhagen and took his degree in January 1897. Later that year he took part as a geologist in a Danish scientific expedition led by Frode Petersen to Egedesminde in West Greenland. In 1899 he returned to Iceland and worked on the geology of the island. He proved, not without controversy, that the Palagonite formation was largely contemporaneous with the Pleistocene epoch, his views being stoutly disputed by the then recognized authority on Icelandic geology, Thórvaldur Thoroddsen. Pjeturss published his main conclusions in *Om Islands geologi* (Copenhagen, 1905) and in the section entitled "Island" which he contributed to *Handbuch der regionalen Geologie* (Heidelberg, 1910). In later years Pjeturss wrote extensively in Icelandic on philosophy and cosmogony.

PHILIP SIDNEY SMITH was born in Medford, Massachusetts, on 28 July 1877 and died in St Albans, Vermont, on 10 May 1949. He studied under Professor Shaler at Harvard and later taught there himself for several years. In 1906 he joined the Alaskan Division of the United States Geological Survey and for nine years was engaged in field work, mainly in the area between Kotzebue Sound and Bristol Bay. In 1915 Smith was appointed Administrative Geologist in the Geological Survey, and served in that capacity for 10 years; towards the end of this period he became Acting Director, and was responsible for the exploration and mapping of United States Naval Petroleum Reserve No. 4. He later succeeded Alfred H. Brooks as Chief Alaskan Geologist and directed the Alaskan Division of the Geological Survey until his retirement in March 1946.

One of his outstanding publications was *The areal geology of Alaska* (Geological Survey Professional Paper 192, 1939), in which he summarized the geological investigations of scores of geologists in Alaska over a period of nearly forty years. In later years Smith participated actively in the affairs of the Arctic Institute of North America, of which he was a Governor.

INNOKENTY PAVLOVICH TOLMACHOFF (I. P. Tolmachev) was born in 1872 at Irkutsk and died in January 1950 at Cheswick, Pennsylvania. Bearing the Christian name of the patron saint of Siberia he took pride in his Siberian origin. Tolmachoff held the post of Chief Conservator of the Geological Museum of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Petrograd. His first Arctic expedition was in 1905 to the rivers Khatanga and Anabar, when he investigated the coal and salt deposits at Nordvik. His other important expedition took place in 1909–10, when he was commissioned to make topographical and geological investigations east and west of the mouth of the Kolyma. He organized the expedition into three parties—the geologist Vollosovitch travelled westwards; Sedov investigated the mouth of the Kolyma; and Tolmachoff himself, with the astronomer Weber and the topographer Kozhevnikov, led the main party eastwards to Bering Strait. Starting from Yakutsk in April 1909, he reached the

mouth of the Kolyma in June, and from there, travelling at first with reindeer and horses, and later by dog team, made his way to Chaunskaya Guba (Chaun Bay) and Mys Shelagaskiy, reached Mys Serdtse Kamen' in November, and finally Mys Dezhneva (Cape Dezhnev) on 2 December. The story of the expedition has recently been published in *Siberian passage* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1949). The outstanding result of Tolmachoff's explorations was the opening up of sea communications between the Bering Strait and the mouth of the Kolyma, which began almost at once in 1911. Tolmachoff left the Soviet Union in 1922 and from then onwards until his retirement in 1945 held the post of Curator of Palaeontology and Mineralogy at the Carnegie Museum, Pittsburg. Had it not been for the first World War and the Russian Revolution much more would have been heard of the Kolyma expedition, which was of the same importance as those of Admiral Vrangal' and Baron von Toll. Tolmachoff's abilities were of a high order and his retiring but attractive nature won him many friends among brother geologists.

J. M. W.